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Congressional Interest and Concern for the Nuclear Cities

Helping Russia Down-size its Nuclear-Weapons Complex
Princeton University
March 14-15, 2000

Congratulations on your choice of subject for this conference. You've picked one of the most challenging, complex areas in the entire arena of non-proliferation issues. It's also one of immense importance to Russia, the United States, and to the entire world.

I've encouraged a national dialogue on the entire range of nuclear issues. As part of that dialogue, I've emphasized the many benefits that nuclear technologies provide. At the same time, I've noted that the daunting challenges associated with military applications of these technologies will block realization of civilian benefits, unless concrete, rapid, and verifiable progress is made toward reducing potential threats.

Today, we face challenges involving the warheads, materials, and expertise developed during the days of the Cold War. With that War behind us, arguably the greatest global security challenge involves containment and management of proliferation threats – many of which are in danger of being fueled with former Soviet capabilities.

Congress is highly supportive of activities that address this threat, as they've demonstrated with strong funding for several, milestone-driven, programs. But where questions about a program's effectiveness or goals have surfaced, Congress is far more cautious.

A significant part of Congressional frustration arises from the wide range of uncoordinated programs dealing with non-proliferation. Each program has reasonable goals, but they aren't integrated into one coherent thrust led by a focused and committed Administration. In some cases, programs share similar goals. Our non-proliferation programs resemble a patchwork quilt designed and

executed by several artists.

The net effect of our non-proliferation programs is far less than it could be and needs to be. These programs are begging for coherent oversight and inter-agency cooperation. To address this need, which is far from new, the 1996 Nunn-Lugar-Domenici legislation called for appointment of a high-level non-proliferation czar.

The Administration has refused to act on this law with its very logical mandate. That's unfortunate, because optimized non-proliferation policies, whether global or specific to the Newly Independent States, require coordination across agencies and an ability to allocate funding commensurate with objectives. Recently, the Congressional Commission to Assess the Organization of the Federal Government to Combat the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, better known as the Deutch Commission, also highlighted the need for this coordinator.

Without such coordination, inter-agency turf fights remain unresolved, potential synergies aren't exploited, and redundancy and inefficiency can run rampant.

The Cooperative Threat Reduction program is a good example of the type of program that Congress supports well. At any time, that program can list the number of launch vehicles that have been dismantled or the number of nuclear submarines that have been destroyed. Similarly, the Highly Enriched Uranium program can catalog the amount of material converted from weapons use. The new plutonium disposition program must similarly define its contributions. These kinds of initiatives receive strong support from Congress.

As just one example, Congress appropriated \$525 Million to achieve two specific non-proliferation goals:

- < to maintain momentum in conversion of Russian highly enriched uranium, and
- < to offer an incentive for conclusion of a bilateral agreement on plutonium disposition.

With these parameters in mind, let me turn to discussion of issues associated with the Russian nuclear weapons complex. That complex contains three main challenges: weapons production capacity, materials for those weapons, and

people. Each area presents a potential proliferation threat.

Congress has provided strong support for programs associated with the materials, where goals and progress are easier to define and measure. The other two areas present unusual challenges, and it's been difficult to structure programs that receive significant support.

The "brain drain" issue reflects a concern that scientists and engineers with critical knowledge might sell their knowledge. The weapons production issue raises concern about Russia's ability to rapidly reconstitute forces that could invalidate future arms control agreements. Both these issues are focused in the nuclear cities.

We already have several programs, like the Nuclear Cities Initiative, Initiatives for Proliferation Prevention, and the International Science and Technology Center that impact brain-drain issues. These programs can point to some real successes; IPP has 19 technologies in or near commercialization.

Nevertheless, each of these initiatives is struggling for resources. And despite our best intentions and some superb opportunities poised for progress, our Nuclear Cities Initiative has barely begun to scratch the surface in dealing with the problem of a cash-strapped and over-sized nuclear complex. To date, NCI has not garnered enough Congressional support to have stable and realistic funding.

The concerns on weapon production capabilities highlight very large asymmetries. The U.S. has significantly reduced the size of our nuclear weapons production complex. These reductions were accomplished openly, and are transparent to Russia. Russia, in contrast, has barely started to downsize its complex. Their complex is still sized at Cold War levels.

Little information about the Russian complex is shared, and ten of its most sensitive cities remain closed. Although the Russian Federal Ministry of Atomic Energy has announced its intent to significantly downsize its workforce, it has been slow in accomplishing this goal and any progress is very closely held.

The current Nuclear Cities Initiative was established to assist Russia in creating job opportunities for employees who are not required to support realistic Russian security requirements and to facilitate conversion of the production facilities. It has focused on creation of commercial ventures that provide self-sustaining jobs,

primarily in three of the closed cities. The current program scope, progress, and funding are not consistent with the scale of the threats to us.

I want to significantly advance our progress in the nuclear cities. However, to gain sufficient advocacy for a major funding increase, the program must demonstrate rapid progress in downsizing and an ability for the U.S. to track progress against verifiable milestones that support a Russian complex consistent with their future national security requirements.

I'm now drafting legislation that I'll propose later this year to address these concerns with the Russian complex. My goal will be to substantially increase the funding and scope of the NCI to assist the Russian Federation in downsizing its military nuclear complex, to authorize a variety of mechanisms in addition to commercialization, and to measure its progress against realistic and transparent milestones.

The ongoing commercialization thrusts should certainly be supported and encouraged. But in addition, I'll propose that we try to encourage use of the Ministry's defense facilities to provide contract research services for industrial projects and support of U.S. agencies. Such research for U.S. agencies might focus, for example, on remediation of environmental concerns or improved technologies for detection of proliferation signatures for weapons of mass destruction.

Among other goals, I'll suggest building on the current progress by the current nuclear cities initiative that has positioned three of the nuclear cities for rapid progress. In one case, at Sarov, I've valued personal interactions with Director Rady Il'kaev that have allowed us to discuss the challenges he faces and the opportunities he sees for rapid progress. I also understand that the Penza-19 serial production facility is another excellent candidate for early progress.

My legislation will demand that funding for this expanded program, for the 2002 fiscal year and beyond, be contingent on making significant measurable progress on key issues of strategic interest to both countries, including:

- ! Demonstrable conversion from military to civilian activities at the four cities participating in the FY 2001 program.

- ! Development of a ten year plan by the Russian Federation for a nuclear weapons complex downsized to reflect the changing national security needs of Russia. This plan should reflect a production capacity consistent with future arms

control agreements.

! Increased transparency of Russian production capacity and nuclear materials inventories to eventually match that of the United States.

I will also attempt in my legislation to force the Administration to finally follow the law that requires better coordination among the multitude of proliferation programs.

As another key part of the legislation, I plan to set aside funding for educational initiatives both in the U.S. and in the Former Soviet Union focused on developing new non-proliferation experts. There are now few people who can assist in these difficult downsizing processes while, at the same time, minimizing the threat presented by residual weapons material or expertise.

I'll be introducing this legislation later this year, and proposing a significant increase in funding for the nuclear cities programs. In my view, it's likely that this increase will be accepted by Congress and the Administration, if the specific safeguards that I've proposed are included. Chief among these is my call for progress to be measured against concrete verifiable milestones that are agreed upon by both nations.

Of course, significant cooperation from the Russian government must occur for milestones to be met. That won't happen unless they concur that these steps are also in their best interests.

I believe progress in this area is in the best interests of both nations. As long as both accept future goals of dramatically reduced nuclear weapons, it's in our mutual interests to accomplish the transition with as much care and as little proliferation risk as possible. It's also in each nation's interests for the other to maintain a sufficiently credible complex to support realistic national security objectives. To the extent that we can take these steps in a mutually transparent way, we should be able to assure each other of our future intentions.

In closing, I want to compliment the organizers of this important Conference. Your deliberations here at Princeton will help me further shape this new initiative.